



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Objection 105

Australian Forest Products Association

2 pages

19 June 2024
Australian Electoral Commission
NSW proposed redistribution

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) is the peak national industry body representing the Australian forest, wood and paper products industry's interests to governments, the general public and other stakeholders on matters relating to the sustainable development and use of Australia's forests and associated manufacturing and marketing of wood and paper products in Australia.

Re – NSW Electoral Redistribution – Objection - Snowy and Yass Valleys should stay in Eden Monaro

AFPA respectfully submits that the redrawn boundaries for the NSW Eden-Monaro electorate which excise the Snowy Valleys and Yass Valley regions from the electorate and joins them to the Riverina Electorate should be reconsidered as it divides communities with substantial shared interests.

Over 1 million hectares of southern NSW South Coast and South West slopes was burnt during the 2019-20 bushfires and over 60% of this was classified as high or very high severity¹. The greatest strength of these communities recovering from fire has been sharing the burden and workload during a long recovery. The duration of recovery of these fires for the forest and the communities is likely to last 20-30 years or a full rotation of a forestry harvest cycle. Moving the severely affected south-west slopes to an electorate that has not been impacted by the fires will disconnect them from other fire impacted communities to a community that will not have the same understanding of their plight. Moving them to the Riverina Electorate where the main emergency service delivery focuses on floods and drought, these communities are likely to feel isolated with reduced support from communities with shared interests.

The excised regions Snowy Valleys and Yass Valley share a strong community of interest with the people of the Snowy Monaro and Queanbeyan Palerang regions. This community of interest is based on strong historical ties particularly in terms of settlement and subsequent development, continuing and long-standing economic interaction, complementary and integrated industries including tourism, forestry and intensive agriculture. These areas share a common border with Victoria and with the ACT and many cases the proximity to the ACT giving shared concerns in relation to social/medical services, emergency services, transport services and employment opportunities.

These regions (Snowy Valleys, Yass Valley the Snowy Monaro and Queanbeyan Palerang regions) share topography, climate and flora and fauna. An important integrating industry is that of forestry which stretches from pine forests and timber milling in Tumut to wood processing in Bombala, to the native forests on the coast and the Eden woodchip mill. Eden remains an important deep-water port for the timber industry. It is for this reason and for the safety of the communities overall that the issue of bushfire management and coordinated emergency services form an important shared interest.

At the same time the remainder of the redrawn Riverina Electorate share little in common with the Snowy Valleys or Yass Valley districts either in terms of shared interests, history, topography, climate or industry. As its name suggests the Riverina Electorate is low land, irrigated farmland well removed from the coast and mostly bounded by other Electorates with similar economies dominated by either the Murray or Murrumbidgee rivers.

¹ [NSW South Coast - DCCEEW](#)

Similarly, the addition of the Goulburn Mulwaree region to the Eden-Monaro Electorate adds a region of little shared community interest as the latter is a sheep grazing region and a major highway and rail link to Melbourne and Sydney. The region has very little common interest with the communities of Yass and the Snowy regions.

I hope the information above assists you. If you have any queries, please contact AFPA Policy Director Richard Hyett [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely, [REDACTED]

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Diana Hallam
CEO AFPA